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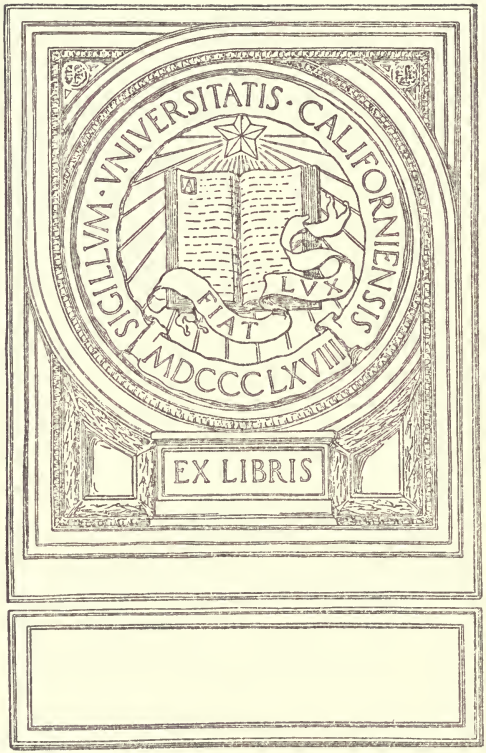
MARTYRED HUMANITY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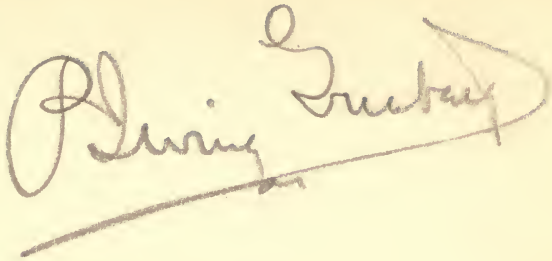

PREFACE

DEAR READER: — Both you and I have a "self" that is comprised of two distinct "me's" or individual identities — one "me" as of the spiritual, and one as of the physical side. For myself, the one I have named Psyche — as of the soul-shape and the ideal. The other I have named Ego — as of the world inhabitant and natural. Of my poems there are, seemingly, these two expressions, dividing into kindred groups and, so far, into two distinct books. This, the first book, ***MARTYRED HUMANITY,*** takes cast of Psyche. The second, which is in process of publication, and which is to bear the title of ***YOU AND ME,*** takes cast of Ego. The two books together constitute the poet-self, as first to be made public.

With three or four exceptions I have never published any of my poetry. The urgency to print in the present instance has come from those of my friends who have had chance-glimpses of these unworldlings, and adjudged me guilty of a wrong in withholding them from public life. They are all the creations of chance-suggestion, environment, and self-consciousness. I do not recall one that was written in my study, or in any place in the nature of a literary work-shop. The poem, "Martyred Humanity," was written exactly as it now appears in a rail-car. The rest are, alike, the progeny of odd situations, and the spells between the exactions of a strenuous life work and the lapses of time in travel. Nearly all have a birth-history.

Sincerely Yours,

Valentine Stewart

NEW YORK, October 15, 1900.

IN PROCESS OF PUBLICATION

YOU AND ME

and Other Poems

By VALENTINE STEWART

Uniform in Size and Style with
MARTYRED HUMANITY . . . .

PRICE, IN CLOTH $2.00
BOTH BOOKS IN BOX 4.00
(Postpaid)

THE SURRY BOOK COMPANY
NEW YORK

MARTYRED HUMANITY

AND OTHER POEMS

By VALENTINE STEWART,

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REVERENTLY

DEDICATED IN

MEMORY

OF MY MOTHER

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Martyred Humanity and Other Poems

PROEM

THIS book hath not the jingle of a bell,
Nor yet the echoes caught from hill to hill;
It doth not murmur of the woodland's spell,
Nor take conception of pedantic skill.

Its birth was offspring of my fitful muse—
As yet unthinking of the paths of song,
Feeling the one chance-sentiment infuse—
The one strong impulse push my feet along.

For me, its songs are living things that hold,
Each with its mood, a consciousness apart,
To be again, as life would be retold,
The child-companion of the parent heart.—

As when of hope—they seem to smile at me,
And come as spirit-children to my arms,
Kissing my soul as moonbeams kiss the sea,
With soft endearments of celestial charms.—

As when of fear — ah, then, each face grows dark,
And unresponsive lifts to me its eyes;
I hear no longer, then, the morning lark,
No longer toil expectant of the skies. —

But there are days when a new light is seen,
When the indefinite takes on and on,
When there is something in their lines, between,
That woos me still to toil and build upon.

As if conception had a sentient soul,
Which deathless grew, as into concrete deed,
So that the purpose had a human goal,
So that ambition sought a heavenly meed.

As if communion held between the twain —
The deed and doer, still of conscious kind,
And every gift gave back itself, again,
As yet the evidence of mind to mind.

So these have been myself — and are, returned —
Wherein was done of me the best I knew,
As then slow reason saw, and faith discerned,
And love in its more tender image grew.

What fate portends cannot be gathered here;
As of all life so must the chance decide;
For me the mandate is: "Thyself uprear!"
And here I strive as of my better side.

To what fair height so shall my work attain,
The mind sees not, nor yet in fancy dreams;
But this, for certain, is the striver's gain—
A sweeter taste born of his own racemes.

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THE ANTHEM

*EGO AND PSYCHE

PART I—THE PRELUDE

One lonely day-close, as in self-lost dreaming,
The twilight thinning to the midnight frown,
Ego and Psyche took to lovers' theming —
As which should wear the more bejeweled crown.

As which — the man or woman — should be higher
In rank of love — so rating earth's estate
That all of worth held in that one desire —
The wish to find and, as life's goal, to mate. —

As which in sweeter sense, all else possessing,
Had yet of love — the more to give and take;
As thus, in consciousness, the larger blessing,
As thus, in soul, the more of Self — awake.

And thus the two, as with their parts agreeing,
Invoked the muse in test of which should wear, —
Ego as man — as life's more sinewed being,
And, for the woman, Psyche — the more fair.

Ego his harp attuned and sang as follows —
For thus beneath love mirrored of its sky —
Sang of the depths where yet the spirit hollows,
Sang as the man that felt what he would try.

* Read "Preface," first page.

MY HEART is fondly longing,
And its spirit arms are reaching
For the mistress of its fancies,
And the dear one of its wish;
It is you who are its idol,
And I lift my voice beseeching
For, now, to feel your presence,
And to hear your garments swish.

It is thus, as roses blooming,
That my dreams of you are showing—
As along the paths of purpose,
Down the vista-realms of time;
For I love you, and I seek you,—
All my manhood's worth bestowing
In a great and mighty passion—
That makes life and love sublime.

O dear one, hear me calling!
Let your heart, its heaven bringing,
Lift its voice in sweet consenting
Till it thrills and chords with mine;
Come:—I wait you, and I want you,
Give your hand to me and, singing,
Let us journey on together—
And forever—down the line.

PART III — THE INTERLUDE

AND now, fair Psyche, emulous for woman,
And bowed in reverence to kiss her skirts,
Upraised her harp and with a sweet acumen
Sang as if love had thus its just deserts.—

Sang as yet thinking man had won the guerdon,
For thus of love, when true, is love's conceit —
To lighten, always, where it shares the burden,
To think the other, always, the more sweet.—

Sang as the woman, yet as man conceived her,—
Sang as in nature's harmony with him —
The woman offered ere the world had grieved her,
The thirsty drinking from the dripping rim.

PART IV — PSYCHE'S SONG

My soul hath heard the summons,
And hath gone to meet the vision
That is, of him, the presence
Whom it chooseth as its mate;
And my woman's heart, expectant,
Thrills with dreams of life elysian,
In which thou art its hero,
And myself thy bride elate.

The stars have taught thy glory,
And the deeper sense of being
Hath long enshrined thee — worshiped
In the spirit's secret fane;
The moon and sun have guided,
And, the earth and sea agreeing,
My hope hath found its crowning,
And my heart, its true domain.

"Take, then, unto thy bosom!"—
It is God who thus hath spoken,
And I yield me as if heaven
Sent its angels to attend;
Receive me as thou willest,
And let my kiss betoken
That I am come — as seeking —
And to love thee — to the end.

CATHEDRAL WINDOWS

MARTYRED HUMANITY

It is not true that Christ is dead—
The martyred One of Calvary,
Or that from earth to heaven is fled
The fairest of humanity.—
Still in our midst, in sweet disguise,
In patient love abideth He;
He looketh out from tearful eyes,
And walketh forth with misery.
In want and care, the Lowly One
Still bears the cross of others' sin,
Still wears the thorns His brow upon,
Still feels the spear His side within.
Where proud oppression rears its throne,
Where sordid wealth buys rank and place,
There still is heard the Master's groan,
There still is seen His anguished face.
A thousand deaths He dies each day,
A thousand lives He lives again,
A thousand Judas' still betray—
A thousand Marys mourn the Slain!

MAN'S GENIUSHOOD IS CHRIST

"AH, TRUE," I said, as twilight fell
On that sad Christmas day,
"To suffer is to cast the shell,
To miss — to learn the way."

I said, as in the faith I saw,
Through pain and sorrow led,
The Symboled Image of the Law,
Borne by the Sacred Dead.

I saw, as never seen before,
By me, — the Spirit Gift,
And felt my wounded soul, and sore,
With thankfulness uplift.

And then, through all that fated life
I traced the bitter loss,
Until Love closed the awful strife —
The Conqueror of the Cross.

"Ah, true," I cried, "the Crown is there —
By His example priced,
And all may pluck the thorns and wear —
Man's Geniushood is Christ."

CHRIST BEFORE PILATE

(Inspired by Munkacsy's Celebrated Painting)

"Christ before Pilate."—Thus the title reads—
By genius told—the Story of the Cross.
Thus, from the canvas, living still, He pleads—
To blinded eyes, the symbol of our loss.
Not as the hero's deed, by death confessed,
Not as the plaint of time, on crime bestowed,
But as the better self in every breast—
The Law of God before the Passion's Code.

"Christ before Pilate."—Is not all the past
Thus set, exampled in the general life?
Was not this tale, in every age recast,
And told, afresh, in every noble strife?

And yet the same, in all extremes of pride,
In every garb, in every grade employed —
Have not the poor, the poorer yet denied?
Have not the rich, the richer so destroyed?

"Christ before Pilate." — Even thus, to-day,
The world's cold edict strikes the loving down;
The Christ in all, we still as all betray,
And place on holy truth the thorny crown.
Still, in His name of names, the God most high,
We shackle reason and obscure the light;
Still, with our schisms, blur the lettered sky,
And Deify in all things but the right.

"Christ before Pilate." — Ah, but not alone
In art preserved, we see the Crucified!
Were there no hearts still echoing the groan,
No gentle souls by cruel power tried,
Had not the shame been felt through all the years,
And conscious pain still drunk the bitter cup,
No pity, now, had bathed itself in tears,
Nor sad compassion hung the chaplet up.

"Christ before Pilate."—Is there yet to be
The sequel written to this tale of blood?
Ah, yes, I read it in man's liberty,
And in the growing knowledge of the good.
The dawn is near, predicted by the Seers,
When none shall suffer in the sacrificed—
As when the Cross, made white with grateful tears,
Shall symbol justice—*Pilate before Christ!*

THE CHRIST IN WOMAN

(Apia — Samoan Islands — 1892)

Two graves lie flattening by a bamboo porch,
Two sisters pray before a bamboo shrine; —
Two of the four that, born of holy church,
Went forth to sow, in savage life, a sign.

A bamboo structure, thatched with cocoa palm,
Nigh where the native road winds round the shore,
Is where they dwelt, these teachers of life's psalm,
Is where they died, the two that went before. —

A home erected on unwholesome ground,
Shaded, almost, to dreariness of night;
Two graves that show within this narrow bound,
Two hearts that kneel, yet, at the altar's light. —

A coarse banana grove invests the place —
Its fruit their nourishment — its stalks their fence;
Such is the lot they chose, these two of grace,
Without a hope of earthly recompense.

They were but women, but in trust they came,
These four, alone, to educate for God;
To plant the light of reason in His name,
And wake the soul still sleeping in its sod.

But all dependent, save as faith should win,
As love gave strength, and good worked out sustained;
They came, self-offered, to these haunts of sin,
The Christ in Woman — of the Cross ordained

SONG

THE one breath in the mortal
That is of the heart distinct,
The one note that, beyond the portal,
Is with all voices linked,—

It lies so, in all singers—
This subtler sense of things—
That to the soul—of all truth-bringers,
Song is consciousness of wings.

FINGER-GUIDES

No one road to Heaven leadeth,
Nor to God, however straight;
"Round and round," the Night-watch readeth,
"Stars do journey to their fate."

Weary Soul, the Wise have said it;
Let resolve thy burdens bear;
With the Night be up, nor dread it—
All of worth is born of care.

Work and hope, for Time is gifted,
And its joys shall yet be thine;
Life is by its work uplifted,
And by hope is made divine!

Thus the goal of rest is certain;
And though mists should spread between,
There, beyond the City's curtain,
Lie the uplands, fresh and green.

Visions sad are all around us;
Yet, though Fate thus sore betides,
Where the crossroads would confound us
God has set the finger-guides.

DISAPPOINTMENTS

DISAPPOINTMENTS are life's turnings,
And to those, the wise of earth,
Are but seen as spirit-yearnings,
Angel-ushered into birth.

Oft, when dreams are rudely shattered,
As when love denies its troth,
And when all is lost that mattered,
Takes the soul a larger growth.

Thus the spirit craves the better,
And where fleshly tastes, perverse,
Would its holier instincts fetter
With a striving for the worse—

Comes, as bar, the unexpected,
Comes, as weighed, the aftermath,
And the soul, before deflected,
Takes its own — the truer path.

Aspirations and desires
Are, in all they seek, opposed,—
One the road to heaven inquires,
One is by the earth inclosed.

Thus, perversely and in blindness,
Oft the baser path is trod,
Until sorrows, meant in kindness,
Turn the straying feet to God.

Sad-eyed mortal, doubt not longer —
Hath thy fondest hopes been vain,
But with purer faith, and stronger,
Take the upward path again.

SPIRIT LANES

THE SPIRIT'S THEME

WHO here shall have read, let him read again,
As yet of these songs to see
If the deeper sense of the world's refrain
Lives not in their minstrelsy;—

Lives not as prelude and hint of much
That subsequent years will show,
When distance, between, shall have palsied the touch
That rhythmed their conscious flow;—

Lives not as the picture of Life's affairs,
As framed of the older land,—
The same bright fancies — the same dull cares,
But never the same one hand;—

Never the same! — however alike
The air and the sense may seem,
No two with the same set strain shall strike
The harp of the spirit's theme.

THE THREE WISHES

THERE sat three men at the roadside,
Where, rounding the brow of the hill,
The road went down to the city, —
To its clatter of wagon and mill.
They were weary with travel, yet gladsome,
For there, at their feet, was the scene
For which they had left the old home-ties,
And traversed the long miles between.

Said one, "Let us wish for good-luck's sake,
Since, so nearly, our goal is at hand,
And as first, and to set the example,
I will wish for the whole of the land,—
For its houses and all things within them,
And for all of its wealth at command."

Said the second, replying, "So wishing,
You give me the right to be free,
And so, and to match your example,
I will wish for the whole of the sea,—
For its vessels and all things within them,
And for all of its wealth that may be."

Said the third, "This will show what the world is,
And whereto its quest would have led;
You have taken the whole earth between you,
And for me, what is left,—but, instead,
To wish,—as in turn the world wishes,—
To wish you, its greedy ones,—dead?"

Then up spake his child—the first wisher's—
Half orphan, as there sitting by,
And said—"Papa dear,"—the sob rising,
And the shine of a tear in each eye,—
"Had the wish of your heart been for heaven,
No one had then wished you to die!"

THE ANGEL-AGE

As once, at the close of a summer day,
I sat in the window, musing—
Musing of love and its wistful way,
Of life and its fateful choosing—

I heard in the parlor's curtained gloom
A sigh on the silence breaking,
And, turning, glanced through the spacious room,
As one in a sudden waking.

And there, in the mirror's dark recess,
And just where the day's slant ended,
I saw my child, in a sunlit dress,
Stand forth where the shadows blended.

And I saw a look in her pure blue eyes
Unnoting where I sat, leaning,
That caused me, with gentle speech, to rise
And, nearing her, ask its meaning.

And this she answered me,—"Papa dear"
(My daughter was not yet seven),
"I see a snow-white angel here—
Just as they are in Heaven."

And thus, I mused, as I gazed with her
Deep into the mirror's gloaming,
How many, in older forms, there were
In the angel's garment roaming!

How many might say, at the mirror near,
Who numbered their seven times seven,
"I see a snow-white angel here—
Just as they are in Heaven!"

KITE FLYING

ONE afternoon, in summer's heat,
I sought the ruffled sea;
Not where the billows beat the crags,
Nor woo the sturdy tree,
But o'er the meadow's open way,
Where tempered wind and sun
Give nature's heart a bolder beat,
And life a freer run.

There, chancing round a grassy knoll,
I came upon a child,
Who with a far-off, swaying kite
Her young desires beguiled;
Just then she fixed upon the string
A tiny paper spray,
That, whirling from her dimpled hand,
Flew upward and away.

"What are you doing, little one?"
I said, as drawing near
I caught her startled, upward glance,
Dimmed with a pearly tear;
"What means the little paper waif
You sent but now abroad?"
"For mother," said the little one,
"A message sent to God!"

"It is my brother's kite," she said,
"He fixed it here but now,
And sent a letter up himself,
And then he showed me how;
If you would like to send one, too,
The good God still is there,
And He will know to whom you write
And just how much you care."

I thanked the little woman-child,
Though with a troubled mien,
For there had flashed upon my mind
The past as it had been,—

In bold relief, I saw my life
Ranged downward to its youth,
And in my inner consciousness
There poured the light of truth.

And thus I saw man's mounting schemes,
Were but so many kites,
That traversed, to their strings below,
Miscalculated heights;—
And that his deeds all challenged thought
To censure or applaud,
As waifs that fluttered up the lines
As messages to God.

UPSIDE DOWN

I wrote, one Sabbath day, to please a child —
My travel-weariness by her beguiled;
Distant from home, her father's honored guest,
I yielded gladly to her sweet request.

But, when I took the book she swiftly brought,
Prepared to use the blank leaf for my thought,
She broke into a laugh, then, with a frown,
And pointing to the book, said: —" Upside down! "

Roused by the sound, my languid Muse awoke,
And seized the words the little fairy spoke.

" Upside down," says little Lighthair,
From Truth's deep well a thoughtless sup,
For she knows not, in this world of care,
That there is nothing right side up.

O sweet little friend, if I really knew,
I would not sing of what was to be;
Some things God meant you, alone, to do,
And better that some He, alone, should see.

If pain awake to sorrow and tears,
Knowledge of pleasure must come before;
Between the two lies the value of years,
And this leads up to an open door—

For time will come when a larger sup,
The false and bitter alike will drown,
And fashion a spirit right side up,
From the mortal buried—upside down!

THE PENNY OF CUSTOM

SHE fell through an upper window,
And the mother who saw her fall,
Rushed, with a horrified wailing,
Out from the under wall.

"She is dead! She is dead! My darling!
She is dead—O God, she is dead!"
And the child, caught up to her bosom,
Heard the burden of woe and said:—

"If I am dead, dear Mammie,
Will you close my eyes, as you did
The eyes of dear little Sammy,
With a penny upon each lid?

"I want to call the angels
To take me up to the skies,
And I could not see them, Mammie,
If you were to shut my eyes!"

Alas! — of the penny of custom,
There is weight on the lids of us all
That blind to the angels that pass us,
To the blessings their presence let fall.

THE SMOKE WILL ASCEND

BURNING so whitely, O candle of mine,
Lifting the shadows so stilly and dark,
Molding dumb thought into scintillate line,
Am I not giving thee spark for spark?
Strange that existence should glimmer like thee—
Wasting in light to its socket—the sod,
Passing away—as the breath of the sea,
Dying—a flame for the studies of God!

Burning so whitely, so coldly and pure—
Down to thine ending, insensible light,
Hast thou an essence still left to endure?
Hath life a being thus winged for its flight?
Hark! There is voice in the candle's last flare,
Waving reply to the question of doubt,
Tracing its sense in dim spirals of air—
"The smoke will ascend as the wick is burned out!"

PSYCHE

A LITTLE rose grew,
Of the lily's hue,
On a storm-swept rock in the sea;
And I gathered the flower,
In a shipwrecked hour,
That it might be as hope to me.—

And I gathered the roots,
And their tender shoots,
And the cupful of earth where they clung;
And now it is growing—
As here it hath showing—
The treasure my treasures among.

THE OMEN

Nor for me the dread Hereafter,
Nor the shrinking at the Gate,
Nor the clinging to earth's laughter,
As of man's but one estate.

I have faith in the Immortal,
I believe in God, and, nigh,
I shall enter at the portal
Of the Spirit, when I die.

Life is sweet, with all its sorrow,
And its hope hath promise been,
That to-morrow, and to-morrow,
I should enter — farther in.

I was sitting, when I wrote this,
In the open, by a stream,
And the sequel that I quote, is
Like the omen of my theme.

From a tree that stood beside me,
Fell a black and leafless limb;
Fell, as if to mock or chide me,
Or as sign direct from Him!

Not a wrench or sound of breaking,
Not a blow — to cause its fall,
But the sudden, swift forsaking
Of its comrades — that was all!

Yet the limb, caught by the river,
Sailed away upon its tide;
And I marveled if the Giver
Thus affirmed me — or denied!

THE IDOL KEPT WHOLE

"IDOLS by time are broken!"—
Nay, not when of years and of years;
The break may be seen in the token,
But not in the worth it uprears.
For not is life's trust of the brittle—
As of merely the shape of the stone,
Nor yet of what makes for the little,
As of clay that the soul must disown.
The bust from its shrine may dissever,
And yet there shall hold without scathe,
The purpose behind the endeavor,
The shrine that was framed of its faith.

"Idols by time are broken!"—
Nay, not when of love and of love—
Of the heart as its better self spoken,
Of the faith that would lift above;
Of these, is the strength that sustains us,
Is the sight that, beyond and beyond,

Sees, ever, the pledge that restrains us—
The pledge to which love is in bond.
For thus do our idols remind us,—
That whereto the ultimate should,
The bad shall be always behind us,
And always before us, the good.

"Idols by time are broken!"—
Nay, not when of soul and of soul;
The worship whereof they are token,
Is always—*The Idol Kept Whole.*
The human, at touch, may still crumble,
The form fall away as we near,
Because it is we who would stumble,
Ourselves that we cease to revere;
But when, of the soul, there is surance,
The idols we rear are of God;—
Of Him, their immortal endurance,
Of ourselves, the grace we applaud.

THE UNIVERSAL BIRTH

A WAVE of thought is speeding
Around the peopled earth,
As Heaven's Archangel leading
The Universal Birth;
Through all the speech of nations,
Through all the walks of man,
To high and lowly stations,
To every tribe and clan,
It stirs the freighted ocean,
It wakes the desert plain,
One holy, swift emotion
Through all the soul's domain. —

All ears, conceiving, listen,
All hearts, receiving, thrill,
All eyes, perceiving, glisten,
All breasts, upheaving, still;

A pause, expectant, flutters
O'er all of human strife,
And every conscience utters
The impulse into life.
Hurrah! The Twentieth Luster!
All hail its coming light!
All hopes around it cluster—
God's freedom for the Right.

SENTIMENT AND GOD

Not on peaks do seasons dally
With the sun and rain,
On the plain and in the valley
Grows the golden grain;
Up the mountains climb no flowers—
Down the steep decline
Only rush the torrent showers,
Through the gloomy pine.

Not on lofty hills nor levels
Grow the grasses green,
Where the mists lie, summer revels—
Hedge and brook between.
Would you learn what this discloses?—
Life is in the sod;
All of hope in this reposes—
Sentiment and God!

THREE MILLS*

"THREE MILLS" to bury the dead!
Ah, what a tale they tell,
With never a sermon said,
With never a funeral bell!
Dead as the pauper dies,
Or as the poor unknown,
With never a plea to the skies,
With never a marking stone.

"Three mills" to bury the dead!
No, not to bury them quite;
But thus is the story read
That hurries them out of sight;—

*Three-tenths of a cent—the price bid by an undertaker (and accepted) under sealed proposals, for burying the unclaimed dead of a great city.

The mask of a public shame,
The deed of unfeeling life—
Unheeded a brother's claim,
Unpitied the closing strife.

"Three mills" to bury the dead!
Ah, whence is the body borne?
Ask of the leaf that is shed,
Of the rose from its setting torn.
The dead in poverty sinned,
Of want there is left but its crust,
So bury the poor in the wind,
And write their names in the dust.

PENURY

CRUEL unkindness,
Born of earth's blindness,
Not of its heart;
Means there are, plenty,
But not one in twenty
Giveth his part.

Shall the world wake at last,
All its uncharity past,
Starving not, giving?
As though God were near,
As though, beyond the bier,
The soul had its living?

Might must essay the task,
Numbers are needed;
Those who are strong should ask—
The weak are unheeded.

Christ still upbears the cross,
Mary still prays,
Judas still counts his dross,
Pilate still slays!

Watchman, Arouse the night!
Ring out the bold affright!
Wake every sleeper!
Bodings of dread are near,
Voiced by the sage and seer—
God is the Weeper!

PASS ON!

I saw last night at a party—
A dinner in Savoy's best,
The Genius of mirth embodied
In an odd little human breast;
In a form arrested and broken
By fate's indiscriminate hand,
Yet leaving the soul as of stature,
And the better of self in command.

The vision of life thus deflected—
Gracing the feast of the night,
Followed me back to my lodgings,
And stood as an angel of light;
Stood, as I sat and pondered,
Until, from the dark evolved,
I saw the blend of the picture
Into its tints resolved.

I saw the dwarf and cripple,
The deaf, and dumb, and blind;
Those whom oppression blighted,
And those whom fortune dined;
The strong, erect, and handsome,
The homely, weak, and bent,
The love-caressed and lighted,
The passion-scarred and spent,

And said: "Had lives been equal,
Would life have known a zest?
Or had earth held forever,
Would man have been earth-blest?"
This said, the thought I pondered,
Until the mind rehearsed
All of its own life's promptings—
The visions it had nursed,

The loves bestowed and tasted,
The ventures lost and won,
Its poverty and its riches,
Its midnight and its sun,
And, through it all, the longing—
With every dream alloyed,

The longing for the real life
Still in the world's wide void.

Then, as the night grew ashen,
In the first faint streaks of dawn,
I saw, with clearer vision,
The truth as under-drawn,
And saw that death was mercy,
And that the good God planned,
For, thus, the birth of a soul-form
As shaped by its human hand.—

For always the larger power
As yet of life's joy and woe—
For a "me" in infinite changes
As wrought of life's ebb and flow.
And I saw that the spark eternal
Was struck from the one great Soul,
And that the "I Am" of the human
Was alike in each heart's rôle.

And that, however shapen,
Or voiced by the burdened breast,
There was, for all who sought it,
The heaven of the blest.

And now, as the morning broadened,
And the duties of day drew near,
I saw, as I opened the shutters,
The answer thus made clear:

There is, for the vile — repugnance,
There is, for the cruel — pain,
For the heartless rich — disaster,
And for the proud — disdain!
But, for the loving, always,
Who suffer and grow strong,
There is the nearer heaven,
There is the fuller song.

How else would wrong be righted —
With still the bent in all,
Save as should Death the wrappings, cut,
That held the soul in thrall?
How else were life eternal —
Knowing an infinite range,
Save as should Death be torch-bearer
Through a round of change?

And who would be mortal always?
Who would grow old, and old?

For time would be told in its feelings,
If not in its wrinkles told;
Told in its shame and sorrow,
If not in its palsied limb;
In the care lines on the forehead,
If not in the sight grown dim.

And the world — ah, who would possess it?
Who but the strongest and first —
The hardest of heart, and the meanest,
The loveless, the faithless, — accurst?
No! none may recall the departed;
No mortal may stay if he would, —
"Pass on!" is the mandate eternal,
Alike to the vile and the good.

"Pass on!" thou pampered and feted,
"Pass on!" thou wretched and shamed, —
For all, there is yet the reversion,
Whereof shall be justice proclaimed;
There is yet for existence its heaven,
And the infinite deathless in God; —
"Pass on!" the grave is life's portal,
And the crown is where angels applaud.

WHAT WISDOM SAITH

I ASKED of Wisdom, climbing high
Above the heads of men,
What was there in the farther sky
Revealed unto his ken?
He said, as pointing where he saw
The paths by genius trod,
"The truth in universal law—
The Fatherhood of God."

I asked again, as most of worth
For Wisdom to discern,
What was there in the rounded earth
The one thing I should learn?
He said, as climbing still above,
He saw the heavenly plan,
"The truth in universal love—
The Brotherhood of Man."

I asked again, what Wisdom found,
As shown of nature's strife,
That fixed, as one eternal round,
The soul's immortal life?
He said, as still above he stood,
"The cross for all sufficed,
The truth in universal good—
The Spirithood of Christ."

MEMORIAL HALL

RETROSPECTION

Some scenes, remembered of a buried life,
Are here reset in honor of the past;
Some grew in verse, the offspring of the time,
That since have faded in devouring flame,
And left no trace to start or nurture thought.
The blame is this, if some these rhymes neglect,
For gifts of love bear interest in kind,
And I would now pay usury.

Man lives
In spots, and grows by jerks; existence, else,
A stay or pause. The soul, in some old rut,
Is ever hardening with an outer shell;—
This cracked and cast aside, an instant sees
The soul the double of its former self.
These shells, preserved, may still a worth disclose—
Some beauty yet develop, or, as held
To listening ear, some note betray of song.

Begotten such had I, or thought I had,
In casts that gave a hundred tunes to love,
And linked my fairer, former selves to life.
All were consumed; and at this distance I
Still mourn, unreconciled, as for the dead,—
Though, for a time, their ashes seemed a sign.

SO SHALL LOVE BE

Love is the nightingale that sings to me,
When the spent day goes out beyond the night,
And wafts my soul through realms of mystery,
A meteor-dream soft trailing through delight.—

Or, yet, the lark that, with the dawn of day,
Awakes my soul to view the freshened earth.
Glad with the thrilling power of its sway,
As with the consciousness of heavenly birth.

So shall love be, when heard the angel choir,
As life shall come unto the Open Gate,
The music of the heart's immortal lyre,
Wherewith the spirit shall encounter fate.

SHORT AND SWEET

(IMPROMPTU)

SAID a brown-eyed maiden, laughing,
"Write me something short and sweet;"
Said, as if she were but chaffing,
Yet as though she did entreat.

Brown-eyed maiden, thus I write you,
Laughing back your light request;
Love shall, one day, thus requite you,
Under pretense of a jest.

Watch out! if you would be wary,
Warned, you still may beat retreat;
Maiden, of your smiles be chary,
Love is never "short and sweet."

IN RETURN FOR A ROSE

FAIR LADY: — The flowers I send thee
Are the heart's silent tribute to grace;
May their beauty a happiness lend thee,
Their fragrance a memory trace
Of worth that would ever defend thee,
Of love that would ever embrace.

They come as a pledge of devotion —
As the pleadings of hope — unto thee;
Exhaling the depths of emotion
So stirred by thy dear gift to me —
The depths — ah yes, of an ocean
That tides with the uttermost sea.

Fair lady: — Afar-off I greet thee,
As a dream that lies yet in its sleep;
Awaking — ah, how shall I meet thee —
Or is it to smile or to weep?
Or is it that love may entreat thee —
Or that but a rose I may keep?

A BIRTHDAY GIFT

THIS book, the author famed and great,
Here marks thy annual setting sun;
A statement which is formulate,
Quite algebraic, "x plus one."

Let "x" be substitute for age,
Or yet for love—its dream of good,
The first solution must engage
A sum unknown, whate'er we would.

Alas, that "x," with equal truth,
Should symbol fate, when life is done;
But let us hope a second youth
Will make the statement still—"plus one."

WORTH CONFESSED

(Written in a copy of Bret Harte's works)

To you, dear friends, this book is come,
As here in form addressed,
A tribute to your gracious home,
And to your worth confessed.

I send it in the hope that when —
And often may it be —
You read its title, you shall, then,
As often think of me.

THE SOUVENIR OF A DAY

PART I — THE INSPIRATION

"I DARE you," said a dainty girl —
One of those woman-misses,
Whose graces are as hair in curl,
And speech as rhythmic kisses;

Whose dress and air affect the queen,
And, yet, whose smiles and blushes,
Like love-thoughts under veil are seen —
As lilies under rushes.

"I dare you write to me in rhyme —
They say you are a poet,
And you have known us such a time —
How mean of you! — but show it! —

"Show that you are, indeed, a bard
(The muse but here rehearses),
And write me, with all due regard,
A set of pretty verses.

"You dare?" I said, "when this is where
The heart must stake upon it?
So be it." Well, I wrote—"The Dare,"
And later on—"The Sonnet."

THE DARE

DARE pitched a rider in the ditch,
Dare got a thief in trouble;
Dare filled the consecrated niche,
Dare made a fortune double;
Dare widowed a fond woman's heart,
Dare won a maiden's plighting,
Dare gave the fool his lasting smart,
And now drives me to writing.

THE SONNET — TO FAY

WHEN after years, in colder climes,
Recall the dream's bright glances wove,
And memory, with her thousand chimes,
Awakes the ghosts of buried love;
When backward, o'er the track of time,
My saddened thoughts return to muse,
And each sweet spot, embalmed in rhyme,
Assumes again the olden hues;
O deem it not a wanton play
Of fancy o'er the poet's skill,
That I shall fondly picture —"Fay,"
And linger long at — Fayetteville.

When traveled years a genial glow
Diffuse around the winter's hearth,
And licensed age, with locks of snow,
Becomes a child in childish mirth,

When, garrulous to listening youth,
There lives as yet by care unvexed,
I hold my wisdom up for truth,
And make my life the constant text,
Be sure the loosened tongue will stray
Throughout the happy past, at will,
And come, with pride, to falter—"Fay,"
And babble tales of — Fayetteville.

And when, at last, the tolling bell
Proclaims the vital spark is fled,
And through the nave the organ's swell
Breaks on the last rites of the dead;
When, bursting through its troubled dream,
My pain-awakened soul descries
The rays of truth, eternal, gleam
Athwart its space-defying eyes,
Be sure, e'en then, it will obey
The laws of its own nature, still,
And find one chord of bliss in —"Fay,"
One foot of Heaven in — Fayetteville.

AFTER THE OPERA

(IMPROMPTU)

As from the opera home returned,
My soul in song uplifted far,
I sought my room, alone to muse,
And, careless, left the door ajar,

There, posed in silence, soon I heard
The breezy ripple — woman sprung,
And gathered near, for light repast
And cozy gossip, those who sung.

Unminded by propriety,
As in a public house we were,
And feeling thus the pleasure grow,
So late vouchsafed, I did not stir.

Unheard since then, I still but knew
The sweeter voices in their parts, —
The saucy Nancy making fun,
The loving Martha winning hearts, —

When lo! as if he were a part
Of the bright life in which they grew,
They question made of stranger guest,
And sought reply of those who knew.

Judge of the sudden, sweet surprise,
The after-thought of conscious shame,
When, innocent of others near,
They for a moment breathe my name!

Then Love, who wandered aimless forth,
Drew near, enamored of a "star,"
And seeking lodgings in my soul
Left, wide, its spirit-door ajar.

There-through, while he in worship bends,
And kisses oft his idol's hem,
The music steals of one dear voice
That bolt and bar may never stem.

STORY CHIMES

O DREAM of youth and distant time,
Of southern land and flowers,
Of pure blue eyes, of tender rhyme,
Of walks and leafy bowers;—
We gather moss and mistletoe,
In sweet unconscious longing;
We scent the rich magnolia-blow,
With never thought of wronging;

We search the deeper forest shades,
And find their hidden treasures;
We thread the river's stillest glades,
And catch its sweetest measures;
We watch the two wild currents cross,
That strangely never mingle;
And each the wish-fraught flowers toss,
To see how fate shall single.—

How if the currents, torn apart,
Shall so our lives dissever;
Or, flower-wedded, heart to heart
Bear us two on forever;—
Bear through the eddies formed between,
And through the swirl and smother,
To where the river's course, serene,
Shall give us to each other.

O faintly spreading eventide—
The last—the dream is broken;
We part—our ways diverging wide—
The parting thrill unspoken;—
And still remembered—ah, how well,
Without a kiss, or favor,
By that first heavenly, human spell—
Life's first love and its savor.

She blushed and smiled, as in my hand,
In shyful way I caught hers,
As, led by her, we came to stand
Beside the Mystic Waters.

For so had now the heart led on,
And now had so the hour,
That I would pledge the hand upon,
And she, love's occult power.

"Come bend and drink," she tearful said,
"Here from this bowlder leaning,
By lover's tears, the spring is fed—
The draught hath happy meaning;
No faithless heart may feel the charm,
But, quaffed with trustful yearning,
The spring is said to keep from harm
And speed the wished returning."

O long unyielding years in quest
Of honor blindly straying,
Too late — the silent worth confessed —
The wish at last obeying,—
I pluck the blue forget-me-not,
And hie through wonted covers;
I find the four-leaved clover sought,
And murmur, "We are lovers."

But dark and chill the river flows,
And cold and strange the greeting;
Beneath the falling laurel-blows,
We hold the promised meeting.
The shadows, rising from the west,
Stretch through the simple grating,
And light upon one heart — at rest,
And one in sorrow — waiting!

THE SONG OF IMMORTAL LIFE

(Lines Accompanying a Christmas Gift to a Lady Author)

This pen, Dear Friend, is a gift to thee
In more than its shining gold,
Or its haft of pearl from the Indian Sea,
For this shall thy fingers hold —

And trace, ere yet salt tears shall flow,
Or strickened hopes grow dumb,
Bright thoughts, from thy young soul's radiant glow,
To lighten the years to come.

And love's glad fancies, told like beads
At the sacred shrine of prayer,
Shall thus be sown, as heaven-sent seeds,
To bloom in the walks of Care.

And pity's tear-drop thus shall shine,
A pearl in its native shell,
And cast o'er each sad, darkling line
A holy, tender spell.

And high resolves shall thus be set,
And gifts by genius won,
As gems in beauty's coronet,
To light the faint heart on.

And thus shall faith, in its halo seen
Like a star at eventide,
Shine out, through the darker skies, between,
To all the world beside.

And passing throngs, in after age,
When closed is the mortal's strife,
Shall read, where the angel scored thy page —
"The Song Of Immortal Life."

This pen, Dear Friend, is a gift to thee
In more than its shining gold,
Or its rare white pearl from the Indian Sea,
For this from its point was told!

KELVIN'S JUBILEE

GREETED by mind and throne
As never was like before,
Crowning the glory that outshone
The splendor the pageant bore.—

Of study, teaching and thrifty deed,
Of virtue as well applied,
Of science and many a crowning lead
Through truth, afar, espied,—

This is the World's jubilee;
For the Scotch savant a plan
Conserving in honor and memory
His fifty years*—a man!

His was the skilled part in the cable laid,
That, first, to listening ear,
Stretched by the faith a Field displayed,
Brought the far continents near.

* Fifty years a professor of mathematics.

His was the thought that plumbed the sea,
That gave to the mariner, guide,
That told of the shoals, stretched far a lee,
Where shipwreck poured its tide.

And his was the short cut through device,
(So mind is with wonders rife),
That gave to the mathematician twice
The working hours of life.

For him, the world a work-shop was;
For him, its all of worth
Lay in the means that traced to Cause,
And gave Conception birth.

So, by work were his skies impearled,
And so shall all work leaven;—
No child is born to less than the world—
No soul, to the more of heaven.

WILL IT BE?

(SUGGESTED BY A KODAK-PHOTO OF A YOUNG LADY)

A WORLD'S conjecture, stands the riddle here:
A moment's life arrested at the gate;
What shall the sequence be — a smile or tear?
And what determine it — or will or fate?

Thus oft we stand, mute, motionless, alone!
When some familiar thing engages thought,
To catch once more the mind's sweet undertone —
In happy converse with the unforgot.

Thus, too, we muse of those whom, in our hearts,
We hold as treasures under lock and key;
For whom, perhaps, a word unreckoned parts,
To meet no more in life's weird mystery.

And yet the sad reflection — He is gone!
Who, first in touch, gave love its first surprise,—
Gone as the flush that ushered in the dawn,
Or as the day that with the sunset dies.

Unread the story of the after-past,
Untasted life still brims its fragile bowl;
No kiss, as yet, has sped the fateful cast,
Or fond endearment thrilled the conscious soul.

Untutored so, expectant fancy paints
The dreams of loverhood with virtue's glow;
As rapt devotion crowns the holy saints,
And joins to God the grosser man below.

A world's conjecture, stands the riddle thus:
A maiden gazing on the rounded sea,—
Herself the question, "Are there two of us?"
And that fond hope of Heaven — "Will it be?"

AUSTRALASIA

Some perfumed lines have come to me,
Around the sea's expanse,
Evolved of friendship's mystery,
As set in a life's romance;
Their presence sets my heart aglow,
And, lighted by its gleams,
My soul and memory hand-clasped go
Into the land of dreams.

It is as if I dwelt, again,
In that far-under land,
And saw its wonder-wrought domain
Before my gaze expand;
Or that, again, I sailed its coasts,
And saw its grim walls rise,
The symbols of the strength it boasts,—
The pride of flag it flies;

Or that I passed its cities through,
And climbed its mountain seams,
And sought again the ferns that grew
Beside its silent streams;
Or that I ranged its trackless plains,
Its somber, pathless woods,
And caught again the weird refrains
Of their vast solitudes.

I see, again, each favored spot
Where fond endearments sprung,
And where the charms by Nature wrought
Inspired my willing tongue;
I see fair Sydney's harbor gleam,
Where stately war-ships ride;
I see its homes, as walls of cream,
Stretched downward to the tide;

I see its regal Waratah;
Its one dear little rose;
Its Lady MacQuarie's Chair; and far
The hills that all inclose;

I see its busy haunts, its drives,
Its wealth of parks, its skies,
Its headlands, where the ocean strives,
And swift the sea-gull flies.

I see proud Melbourne's width of streets,
Its far-extending mart,—
A noble bosom, wherein beats
A growing nation's heart;
I see, again fair Adelaide,
And Brisbane, fair as famed,
And Hobarttown, by hills displayed,
And Auxland — not least named,

And Ballarat, still nurse of mines,
And Perth, and, stretched between,
The village fanes, and country shrines,
To which my feet have been.
It is as though I journeyed still,
And still, an honored guest,
Was yet the entertained at will,
By worth and friendship blest.

O tender ties that lives beget!
O fragrant dreams of youth—
The memories in the soul that set
Engendered of its truth!
Land of the Southern Cross,
And of the storm-rift shore—
Where guards the sentinel albatross—
To thee, adieu, once more!

SOUVENIR OF A VISIT

(Written in a Copy of Longfellow's Poems)

Dear Host and Hostess: — Please, this book
Accept with my most kind regard;
I could not have such friends forsook
Without some token of the bard.—
And here, as set, I would were read,
When time shall drift us far apart,
The sweeter sentiments of the dead
As linking us heart to heart.

THE COMMON PATH

(WRITTEN IN A VOLUME OF RILEY'S POEMS, SENT IN RETURN FOR THE GIFT OF "THE COVENANTERS OF MORAY AND ROSS")

I THANK you for the book received
And reading it have found
It took me, with a fresh delight,
Over familiar ground.
I cannot make you like return,
Save as the poet hath,
In the quaint volume this shall bear,
Led over the common path.

"ALL SAINTS"

THE INSPIRATION

A group of friends — to each of whom, one night,
I gave a Zircon Cross, with my regard —
Conceived the happy fancy to unite,
And form a league in honor of the bard.

To which they asked that I should give a name,
And I, unthinking how we build restraints,
Gave on the spur, and they with one acclaim
So took — as five the title had — "All Saints."

From this conception grew, until resort
Was had, for parting, to a loving cup,
And half in seriousness, and half in sport,
Request was made that I should write them up.

And furthermore, as having talked of soul,
Of psychic force, and of its mental cult,—
Of the new ether and the will's control,
And how to test, they came to this result:—

That, as one mind, for some appointed time,
They should on me so concentrate desire,
That I, inspired so, should wake to rhyme,
And make themselves the subject of my lyre.

That night subjected—unaware the fact,
I wrote what follows—bar a touch or two,
Though tired nature strove against the act,
As now, my whilom prompters, strive may you!

THE ASPIRATION

"All Saints" I said their name should be,
And, yet, as mortals woo
"All Hearts" had been, of destiny,
The more prophetic clew—
Had been the name still more in line
With what to-night was leaven,—
The impulse to cement, combine,
And form "The Zircon Seven."

There is in "Saint" the hint of hymn,
Of crucifix and stole,
Of love passed up through seraphim
To some celestial goal;
While I on earth, in human wise,
Would fain the text had been
That Love had looked through human eyes
Into the depths within;—

Into the human selves we are—
As yet of human mold,
Nor sought with mitred will to bar
The current ocean-rolled—

The stream that rills from tender thought
Adown the dark divide,
In many a swirl and eddy caught
Before it swells the tide.

I know not why I named them thus,
Or wherein I had part,
So little is love emulous
To win above the heart,
Unless some angel-presence, near,
Conceived the moment's plot,
And prompted, as beyond the bier,
The heavenly bond we sought.

Yet, still, the name seems not of me,
For, so is heart perverse,
There is, in all its minstrelsy,
Some rôle it would rehearse—
As yet the less than Saint or Soul,
And nearer earth, as when
Love's first faint fervor through it stole
Into the hearts of men.

But thus some power lifts above,
And, indistinct of mind,
Life's destiny thus shapes of love—
Refining and refined,
Until the incense burns to God,
And, turned from earthly dross,
The Soul goes up the pathway trod
By Him who bore the Cross.

And so it is, the Zircon Cross
Here symbols of the heart
That gathers of its gain and loss
As in the one apart;
For love no more, as of the earth,
Shall wake the poet's theme,
Or bring, as yet of human birth,
To him its golden dream.

A QUAFF FROM TRUTH

"As Separate Striving Souls in Need"
— Line from a Letter.

"As separate striving souls" — indeed,
We stand as of ourselves, alone;
And yet, of other souls in need,
Our hopes are not of things our own,—
Nor yet of fancies dreamed apart,
As of the zenith reared upon,
For there doth beat no human heart
That is the satisfied as one.

And, yet, as separate striving souls
Forever must we grope our way,
Bewildered with a thousand goals
Whereto is every path astray;
And this is why, on either side,
We stretch our hands from wall to wall,
And seek in all they touch the guide,
Lest we should trip, unhelped, and fall.

"In need" — ah, yes, for so is God —
His own the longing felt within,
For not, as one, would He applaud,
Or Christ, as one, compassion win;
For in so much is Nature true —
Wherein to aught we look ahead,
Our plans are always as for two —
As for the leader and the led.

And thee, fair maid, so early wise,
So blest a type of longing youth,
To thee the poet thus replies —
As pledging thus a quaff from truth: —
We are in need — we can but strive —
And seek who may the river's brink,
They must through arid sands arrive,
Who shall the sweeter waters drink.

THE SPIRIT'S SYNAXIS

WOMAN

WHAT subtle, potent power
In weeping woman lies!
Compassion, in that hour,
Must kiss the brimming eyes.

But, oh, the fatal yielding,
When reason tips the beam,
And pity, in the shielding,
Inspires the lover's dream.

And yet, were tears not token
Of soul revealed to soul,
God's purpose had not spoken
In faith's bright aureole.

In woman logic falters;
Her greater strength is this:—
As nuns are seen at altars—
A tear-drop in a kiss.

O woman, woman, woman,
What fated lines are thine!
The angel in the human,
The earth in the divine;—

Of heaven, the sweet confessor,
Of hell, its deeper snare,
Of life, its first transgressor,
Of death, its last despair,—

The rose and thorn of glory,
The praise and blame of strife,
The all extremes in story,
The one sweet mean in—wife!

THE LIBERTY BELL OF THE WORLD

No, not in the blast of a trumpet,
Not in the beat of a drum,
Not in the peal of a signal bell,
Is the thought of Freedom come.

This is born of the Spirit,
And voiced by the living tongue,
And set in the symbols of genius,
Wherever the heart is sung.

No! its sound is not of the belfry,
But, low, of that whisper heard
That over the soul of the universe
Goes in the breath of a word.

It is not where the patriot listens,
Not where the weak give ear,
Or where, in the front of the battle,
Life follows the lead of the spear,

That Liberty's voice is thundered,
But along the paths of trade—
As the aspiration of language—
Is its rhythm of soul essayed.

The tongues of nations differ;
And born of their several speech,
Are the differing strains of their war-cry,
Are the opposite goals they reach.

But there is the voice as of concord
That, through the confusion of tongues,
Breaks on the slumbering reason,
And gathers of conscience, lungs.

Its songs are as born of Creation,
Its music as read in the face—
As of beauty that holds and entrances,
As of strength that is sceptered by grace.

It gathers the flowers of intellect,
The arts of the world and their worth,
The weighed revelations of science,
And the treasures of heavenly birth.

It focuses virtue and valor,
It deifies justice and mind,
And broadens, with every day's sunrise,
The path to the unconfined.

It gives to woman her heritage,
To man his highest ideal,
To sentiment, hearthstone and altar,
And prelude to all that is real.

It is cradle to inspiration,
It is nurse to devotion and love,
And parent to every emotion
That lifts, and still lifts above.

It strikes from the bondman his shackles,
It takes from the tyrant his crown,
It gives to the people the sceptre,
And rule to the ballot and town.

No! not as the blast of a trumpet,
Not as the beat of a drum,
Nor as a peal from the watch-tower,
Is the mandate of Freedom come.

But from the language as spoken
As first of that double isle—
The winnowed of races and ages,
The blended of tear-drop and smile.

The rhythm of Celtic and Anglaise,
Of Saxon and Roman and Greek—
That only to Freedom is measured,
That all shall be Freemen who speak.

And this shall be prophecy written:—
No matter what flag is unfurled,
The English tongue will be, always,
The Liberty Bell of the world.

WE TRYING DO

I WRITE these lines as one who would
In all life's rounds the quest pursue;
I know not why I may, or should,
Unless it be — we trying do.

I know not whence the impulse comes,
Nor why I thus new paths explore,
Unless it be our lives are sums,
And we but live in something more.

I have no wish in this defined,
I have no goal I thus would gain;
I only know that work and mind
Do never partnership in vain.

I only see, as simple truth,
Wherein we strive we widen room,
And take upon fresh strength of youth
With every virtue we assume.

Life's earnest faith, its constant hope,
Are well-springs of a conscious soul
Which finds through these its larger scope
And ultimate control.

Nor wealth, nor rank may fill repose,
Nor peace, nor plenty quicken life;
God's purpose is vouchsafed to those,
And those alone, with time at strife.

Nor touch, nor taste existence is,
Nor sound, nor sight, nor length of day;
To "do" is life's one source of bliss,
To "try" is its one blissful way.

So will it hold, in this my stake,
If one shall read these verses through,
And feel resolve — from slumber wake,
Here having seen — we trying do.

HA–WA–II

HA-WA-II! Ha-wa-ii!
Thou cradle of desire,
Of sun-kissed fruits and flowers,
Of beauty, love, and fire;
Of emerald deeps and shallows,
Of coral reefs and caves—
Ha-wa-ii! Ha-wa-ii!
Thou genius of the waves.

I love thee! I love thee!
The weary soul would rest,
As wrapped in blissful slumbers,
Upon thy tender breast;
As wooed by thy fair maidens,
As clasped by thy warm arms—
I love thee! I love thee!
Thou wonder of earth's charms.

Ha-wa-ii! Ha-wa-ii!
Thy name shall henceforth be
The one sweet bond of friendship
And charm of hope to me;
Thy hills shall fill my visions,
Thy shores shall woo my feet—
Ha-wa-ii! Ha-wa-ii!
My life's long-wished retreat.

NOTE—This poem was written on shipboard, as the Hawaiian shores were receding from view.—August, 1892.

THYSELF

UP, BRAVE youth, the future calls thee,
Give no sun to sluggard sleep;
Push right on — though night appall thee,
All is thine to lose or keep.

Choose thy path — and be it any,
And the end be soon or late,
Be temptations strong and many,
Give no hostages to Fate.

Facts, alone, are records written,
And all else is thine and God's;
Be by no base slander smitten —
Hold thy right against all odds.

Join no lot to those who smuggle,
Nor with those who rashly plan;
Fortune comes to those who struggle,
And the world is theirs who can.

Through all gain this purpose carry:
Not to hoard as sordid pelf,
Nor, at last, with ease to tarry,
But to win and love — Thyself!

THE SENTENCE OF DEATH

WATCH out! young heart, watch out!
While the years of thy life go by;
For deeper, and deeper in doubt
Will the shadows behind them lie.

Treasure thy youth and hearken
To the echo across the vale,—
Time hath a touch that will darken,
And the cast of that touch is pale.

Kiss, if thou wilt, yet borrow,
From each day of the present, a light
That shall shine in that distant to-morrow
A radiance set in the night.

Watch out! young heart, watch out!
While yet there is fullness of breath;
For there cometh a life turned about,
And its hue is the sentence of death.—

A life of gray hair! — Oh, heed it,
For the world will be distant and cold,
If thy youth is not present to feed it,
To clothe it, to love and uphold.

ALONE!

Not of all the world's vast thronging,
Not two hearts, though side by side,
Beat as with the one-self longing—
As they walk their paths divide.

Thus it is that doubts assail us,
And the strongest hearts repine;
Thus it is that prayers avail us
Nothing—at another's shrine.

Thus it is the mournful turning
From the love-hopes of the past,
And the weeping and heart-burning,
And the death-dread at the last.

Thus it is that night is terror;
And its saddest sigh, or moan,
Is the voice of life's set error—
In the one sad word—"Alone!"

TWO HEARTS

THE ruffled sea, upon a summer's day,
Sprinkled a sloping lawn with briny spray;

And through the trees, whose shadows streaked the shore,
It poured its cool and rest-inspiring store.

Gazing thereon, as silhouettes in white,
Two lovers loitered, brimful of the sight;

And as they gazed, the tonic of the scene
Gave life a richer glow of health between;

While fancy, sky-winged, took them by the hand,
And led them — dreamers — into Lover's Land.

For one, the storm uprose, the lightning played,
And night came down to find him undismayed;

The other saw the landscape set to song,
And culled bright flowers as she danced along.

The visions passed; and strolling seaward, each,
In silent musing, wrote upon the beach

These words entwined — as though their minds were run
In the same human mold — "Two hearts — as one!"

Discordant broke the cawing of the crows,
And from the wastes the sea-gull's scream uprose;

The soughing trees in mournful cadence swung,
As if they prophesied with saddened tongue;

The waves, in solemn dirge, as Fate's approach,
With lethic flood on love's fond lines encroach:

And, ere the lovers reach the firmer land,
They wash, "as one," from out the fickle sand;

But leave the words — as lives have each their parts —
To stand as truth for all of time — "Two Hearts."

THE THREAD OF LIFE

LIFE as a thread to its mesh is dealt,
In casts of the road it travels,
With ever a stitch for the moment felt,
In a plot no hand unravels;
With ever a pull on the vital reel,
When, snarled at an awkward angle,
The line goes out with a sudden screel
To hitch in a fatal tangle. —

From day to day — as hope to hope,
As thin as a spider's spinning,
And, yet, as strong as a hangman's rope —
From sinning unto sinning;
As weak, too, as the spider's thread
Where heart to the heart is netted,
And where it touches the silent dead —
Strand-parted and rough-fretted.

GOD'S PITY

As yet betwixt existence held—
The upper life and under,
Its doubt in dawning truth dispelled,
Its fear, in growing wonder,

The parting soul, with straining flight,
O'ertakes its purer longing,
And sees behind, like climbing night,
Its grosser passions thronging,

One quick, appealing glance is cast,
That it may hope discover,
One fateful question, and the last,
Ere yet the last is over,—

"What may the soul, O shrinking earth,
That it might error leaven,
What may it urge, as yet of worth,
To plead its way to Heaven?"

One effort, and the lips have stirred —
Ere yet the stirless city,
One sentence, and the soul hath heard —
The saving truth — "God's Pity!"

ASPIRATION

AND O, for a day in the clouds—
To gather their bolted air,
To pierce and burst the shrouds
That lie in the sepulchre—Care.

And O that my song were a fire—
To purify might of its mold,
To blare and blaze up higher
Till its cinderless worth were told.

And if only the strength were mine
To scatter or keep as I chose,
I would give to the weak a sign,
With a spear in my side,—who knows?

For the shame of all time was crowned
In Him of the crucified race,
And where may not Pilate be found,
In a world that is servant to place?

Would that my life were a voice
To break on the sleep of the soul,
And, waking, the Poor might rejoice,
And the Rich be ashamed of their dole.

And, yet, I must weep for the rude,
And doubt for the vicious and low,
While I cry to the God of the good
For a faith that is more than a show,
For a Christ not written in blood,
For a symbol the world may know.

LIFE AND LOVE

I sing of Life as a stately ship,
With her white wings all aspread,
With her snowy trail, and her buoyant dip,
And the bright sky overhead;
But ah, for the downward sinking sun,
And for the soul on deck,
For the storm-swept course so swiftly run,
And the all unsparing wreck,—

For Fate is the sea o'er which they sail,
And down to its depths they go,
Who heed not the signs of the coming gale,
Ere yet the fierce winds blow;
Down to the depths of cold and gloom,
To the haunts of vice and crime,
To the tramp's despair and the pauper's doom,
And the dead past's ooze and slime.

I sing of Love as a summer's day,
With a flowery plain beneath;
But ah! for the sun in its westward way,
And want's bleak, barren heath;
Through beaten paths the strong may go,
But the sick, and the poor, and the tried,
These are led by their master—Woe,
In the rougher paths aside.

But O, for hope's sustaining power,
And, over all, the Sky,
For God's all-conscious heavenly dower,
And life's — Infinity;
The rougher paths at the hills begin,
And he the better hath,
Who strives with the strength of the soul within
To gain the higher path.

LABOR ELATE

THERE is in the eye of Labor,
As with consciousness elate,
Like the flashing of a saber,
The gleam of a coming fate;
Let the Prudent scan its meaning,
Let the Wise in time take heed,
For the walls of Faith are leaning,
And the weaker have the lead.

There is in the heart of Labor
The wild throbbings of a trance,
Like the beatings of a tabor
To a weird and mazy dance;
A giant as yet he slumbers,
And a child may pluck his beard,
But beware his waking numbers
In the struggle to be feared.

There is in the soul of Labor,
As still may virtue seem,
The love for friend and neighbor,
And hope in Heaven's dream;
But ah, should night still lower,
And should the hours seem long,
What charm shall curb his power,
Or hold from a mighty wrong!

SELF UNTO SELF

O Life, what hast thou given me
That I may carry hence?
Hast thou for all thy present task
A future recompense?
Hast thou a mind within a mind,
A breath within a breath,
A noble treasure sealed to me
Beyond the touch of death?

O unseen self, within I hear
Thy low, familiar voice;
At least, we two are one, indeed,
For this, O heart, rejoice!
While still one spark of consciousness,
In aught I am, remains,
Thou wilt inspire my truest joys,
Or else my deepest pains.

What value hath the praise of men
Unless thou, too, approve?
Where lies the joy my lips would feign
Unless thou know'st I love?
What is the pride of wealth, if thou
Account it not mine own?
Or what my poverty, if rich
By thy award alone?

I may not carry rank, or place,
Or wealth, through death with me,
But O, I cannot help but take
Just what I was—in thee!
My fame and tomb some fleeting years
Unto my name may give,
But ever, on thy fadeless scroll,
Each conscious deed will live.

THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS

FAREWELL, immortal pictures! illustrate
Of broad creation's pages open wide!
Thou far-seen beacons to man's high estate,
And thro' the problems of existence guide!
But one life-atom in the sea of life,
Which countless ages have about thee rolled,
I fall again into its ceaseless strife—
The story of a flash! a moment told!

What to thee the feeble hopes which cling
In sweet association wed to love!
What but the charms which busy seasons fling
Around thy sturdy sides with death enwove!
Thine are the years of matter first create,
Thy cradle chaos! and thine ending God!
Awe-filling monuments of storied fate—
A world lies buried when thy summits nod!

What tho' I scale thy cloud-arresting peaks,
Or climb along thy dark, imprisoned streams,
Or catch weird longings from thy changeful freaks,
Or drink the health that bubbles from thy seams,
The world of action beckons at thy base,
And yawning waits to stifle every thought;
By false opinion whipped along the race
I fly — to fall o'erjaded and — forgot!

WITHIN THE SHADOW

(In Memory of a Friend)

Death is here. A solemn spectre sent
To startle life, unmindful of its end;—
A threat to youth, to age a promise meant,
To him we mourn a loved and trusted friend.

Close at the altar's font, with tearful eyes,
We bear the cold, mute burden of our woe;
While stifled sobs and mournful notes arise
The measure of our muffled tread advancing slow.

No hollow forms of calculating grief
Constrain attendance of the fashion here;
No gilded pomp proclaims the honored chief
That pride may rise unchallenged from the bier.

A single throb of earth, forever stilled,
A single impulse of the boundless mind,—
Not even love can shrine the niche he filled,
Or science trace the breath he leaves behind.

No bold emblazonries of slaughtered hosts
The noble multitude a name insure;
No questioned rank, or vain distinction boasts
The world's true brotherhood — The Great Obscure!

Of such the Dead! Beyond the sorrowing few
Ambitious not, he sought the final goal;
But, ah, beneath that faultless art he grew
Which carves in frailty an upright soul.

His was the genial, cultured glow of age,
The wealth of conscious and deserved respect;
His rounded life a fair, unspotted page,
By death preserved and bound in the Elect.

His memory fading with the onward life,
His body blending with the pulseless sod,
We speed his spirit from our world of strife,
To seek his title on the rôle of God.

I FACE ANOTHER DAY

My Father, O my Father,
From out the gathering gloom,
I cry as one forgotten
In some impending doom;
From out the rift of matter,
Ere yet the closing sod,
In low, despairing utterance,
I call on Thee, O God!

Almost I yield to horror,
To phantasy and doubt,
Almost to that rash impulse
Which snuffs life's candle out;
Almost, O God, almost,
I yield the parting breath,
And ceasing all of struggle
Fall weakly into death.

What stays the fatal moment?
What lights the flame anew?
Is it to strive for other
And nobler work to do?
Or, yet, with higher daring
My crumbling plans to rear,
All radiant with Thy blessing,
All conscious of Thy care?

O Father, still my Father,
My wounded soul to Thee,
Drags through the painful struggle
To clasp a parent's knee;—
Content to yield the honors
Of fame's alluring dome,
To come, however weighted,
As one returning home.

A drop, a single atom,
In all this stir of life,
And yet an awful impulse
In all its whirling strife,

Like me, in like parts, thousands
Of little human hearts,
In little blind endeavors,
Are pierced with aimless darts;—

Wrung by the cold defamer,
Bruised with the hardened plot,
In seeming wrong remembered,
In proof of right forgot,—
This cannot be, O Father;
Thy general law's decree,
Some higher, nobler being
Waits in the end for me—
Where Heaven and Earth are mingled,
And Life is joined to Thee.

So stays the fatal moment,
So wakes the dormant good,
The spirit conquers matter,
And death is yet withstood;
I rise with lighter burden,
I brush the clouds away,—
O Father, with Thy blessing,
I face another day!

THE ORGAN SWELL

RAGPICKERS

PART I

RAGPICKERS! ragpickers!
All men are ragpickers!
While the light, life, flickers
All carry bags!
Yes, from the court and town,
All the gradations down,
All are, as sage or clown,
Gathering rags!

All, with their shoulders bent,
Seeking the worn and spent—
Even the sweepings sent
To the dust-heap!

Or, as of sight above,
From, else, the dreams of love,
Raking the cast-off glove,
O'er which they weep!

What have the richer got,
More than the poorer lot?
Out of life's rust and rot
What may they hold?
What have the fairer won—
When the swift race is run,
What of the stars or sun
Has there been told?

What is possessed by them—
Pickers, the best of them—
Lost to the rest of them,
More than a rag?
They, as in rank the first,
As in the most accursed,
Range but from best to worst—
Down to life's slag!

Time comes at last upon,
When to the waste is gone
All that was sought or won—
    Gowned or ungowned;
All that was sweet and fair,
All that was rich and rare,
Gallant and debonair,
    Under the ground.

Who, then, shall claim the best,
Laud it above the rest,
Holding the prouder quest—
    Titles and terms?
Dead, they are equal all,
Honors, or none at all,
King, and the beaten thrall,
    Food for the worms!

What is the world, as seen,
Bright with its walls of green,
But, all its life between,
    Ragpicker's Hall—

Where are displayed, as wide,
Baubles, and rags beside,
Gathered as ages died—
Yes, at the pall!

Palace or hovel-nursed,
All have their parts reversed,
Reassigned and rehearsed,
Staged or unstaged;
Players in tinsel gowns,
Maskers in smiles and frowns,
Tragedians and clowns,
All death-engaged.

Ashes to ashes swept,
Those who have laughed or wept,
Those who have strode or crept,
Just or unjust;
Youth with its golden hair,
Love with its bosom bare,
Age with its lines of care—
Dust unto dust!

Thus, may the truth be read—
Whether of starved or fed;
Even the Christ is dead—
Born of the flesh;
Death all alike begrims,
Nothing that flies or swims,
Nothing that chirps or hymns,
Escapes his mesh.

All are his vassals born,
Bondaged to grief and scorn,
Driven with whip and thorn—
Scourged to their rest;
None may his right deny,
None for his kingdom try,
Prone in his presence lie
The worst and best.

Means he hath ever new;
Even the trembling crew,
Themselves his office do—
In God's despite;

Names that are ranked as proud,
Came of the slaughtered crowd,
Flaunting the bloody shroud,
As conquest might.

Even when loath to strike,
Some, in their own dislike,
With honor's sword or pike,
Give death his prey!
Or, with more subtle plan,
Narrow life's little span,
Hiding, as science can,
The meaner way,

Such is the common life,
A round of pain and strife,
A dream with bodings rife,
A wail of fear;
And those that more assume
Mask but the deeper gloom—
Dreading still more the doom
That drapes the bier!

And what the gain at last?
What but a broken past,
Robed in the tatters cast
From stall to stage?
Rags as from dirt to pride,
From crime to justice tried,
And, as with all beside,
Decrepit age!

RAGPICKERS

PART II

Ah, but beyond the grave!
Is there, as mortals crave,
Power to raise and save
The inner mind?
Set in the soul's domain,
Freed from earth's care and pain,
Conscious of self again,—
Life unconfined?

And, as the Good conceive,
Is there for sin reprieve?
And for the hearts that grieve—
Missing all here—

Is there, as still of earth,
As yet a nobler worth,
A second and larger birth—
A spirit sphere?

Who are the doubters then?
Is it the wiser men,
Who, with the farther ken,
See into space?
Or the benighted crew—
The Saviour, such as slew—
Doubters of all in view,
Even God's grace?

Are there consistent ones,
As if, indeed, God's sons—
Soldiers undrilled to guns—
Who seek life's source?
Standing beneath the Cross,
Grieving the Master's loss,
Spurning, as pitch, the dross
Cried at the Bourse?

Who shall instruct the priest?
Or by fast or by feast —
Sacrifice of man or beast,
Or tale or toll, —
Measure to life its span?
Or, as of proof, who can
Limit to later man
The birth of Soul?

Was there no world before?
No spark the cradle bore
That, as the evermore,
Was loved — and lost?
No growth of mind within —
No dawn of grace or sin —
And, as all selves begin,
No tempest tossed?

Think of life's darker shades,
Think of its meaner grades,
Think of the past that fades,
Shapeless and dumb;

Of all that lived and died,
Of all that laughed and cried,
Before was time descried,
Think of the sum!

Leaves of life's tree were they,
That fell to mold away,
Unreckoned of their day,
Unsaid, unsung;
Who shall deny to these,
Titles and pedigrees,
And, as to Majesties,
Immortal tongue?

Were there not hearts that beat,
Lips that kissed warm and sweet,
Lost in that dumb retreat,
Long æons ago?
Had they no dreams of God—
By nature thrilled and awed—
Seeking, beyond the sod,
Surcease of woe?

Back of old Egypt's days,
Of India's ancient phase,
Lemuria's fabled blaze,
Were there not, then,
Races that spun and wove,
Nations that rose and throve.
And, as in bonds of love,
Women and men?

And were they darker all?
Since on no crypt or wall,
Shown as their cut or scrawl,
Is there engraved
Hint of the whiter race,
Honored or in disgrace,
Profile, or front of face,—
Free or enslaved?

Are we of finer clay,
Race of a later day,
Born, and of right to stay,
Lords evermore?

Patterns in broader stripes,
Giants, whose coming wipes—
Spurning life's cruder types—
All from before?

Is it that God improves,
Working in broader grooves—
As of each day behooves—
The better plan?
Or, that with life there grew,
Struggling all matter through,
A Master-Spirit, too,—
The Master—Man?

Or, then, as others urge,
Is death the outer verge,
Beyond which chant or dirge
Availeth not?
Life but the breath as blown
Of earth and air, alone,
As by its steam is shown
A boiling pot?

Bubbles of primal force,
Puffed from a common source,
Winged for a moment's course,
Without intent?
The set return of race,
The mind's all-round embrace,
The conscious cast of face,
An accident?

Or, then, as one might think,
Standing on wisdom's brink,
Is it as link to link
Gradations cling?
Evolved as from the first,
Offspring of greed and thirst,
By time and season nursed —
From worm to king?

Or, as the stars would teach,
Are they thought's farther reach,
The germ distinct in each,
From birth to birth?

Shaped as of sentient time,
Seen as each race shall climb,
Up its own path sublime—
A separate worth?

Who shall evolve the fact—
Straight through creation tracked—
Evolve the mighty act
That made the world?
Or, through the night of space,
Who shall the seething face
Of matter give to place—
Self-shaped, self-whirled?

Was there no thought before,
No mighty will that bore,
Self-set—The Evermore,
As God supreme?
The "Infinite," as He—
The "Was" and "Is to Be,"
The "All" that mortals see,
And all they dream?

Who can conceive of end?
Whose mind shall comprehend
The skies that round him bend,
Their depths embrace?
Or who conceive of lines
Beyond which nothing shines—
Conceive as of its signs
A worldless space?

. . . . . .

No mind can grasp the plan,
Bridging the mighty span,
From atom unto man,
From sin to Christ!
And, yet, what soul hath need?
As the all-saving creed,
Is there not this to plead—
It hath sufficed?

SCIAGRAPHS OF THE TEMPLE

THE SOUL WILL EVER BE

WE SIGH for a vista straight and broad,
But truth is a winding way;
We seek for a sign from the unknown God,
But Life will have its say.
For — creeds may come
And creeds may go,
But Life will have its say.

We gather the flowers, one by one,
But joy is a boundless store;
We garner the hours, sun by sun,
But Time is the Evermore.
For — creeds may come
And creeds may go,
But Time is the Evermore!

We bind with the sense of fleeting things,
But mind is a shoreless sea;
We quaff at the fount whence Lethe springs,
But the Soul will ever be.
For — creeds may come
And creeds may go,
But the Soul will ever be.

WHAT IS LIFE?

LIFE is the circumstance and sense,
The color and the strain,
The individual in the order whence
The consciousness hath reign;
The first dream put aware
Of spirit or of sod,
The sign by which all things declare
The fatherhood of God.

Life is the infant put to school,
The grammar of the mind,
The weights and measures, and the rule
By which thought is defined;
The birth of passion and desire,
Of sentiment and love,
The revelation of the earth's empire
In all that lifts above.

Life is Creation's working hand,
The details of its plan,

The elements put at art's command
To new combine through man;
The touch that fructifies the ore,
That gives to growth its worth,
That stamps, as Heaven's entrancing store,
The physical in birth.

Life is the masquerade of the soul,
Through which, as virtue's thrill,
Is spread the infinite control
Of God's diviner will;
The journey through the wilderness,
Emotion's cradle, sphere,
The graduate of a world's caress,
The knowledge of a tear!

Life is the definite, all-giving germ,
The vignette on the coin,
The unit of a double term
In which two persons join;
The soul's first troubled glance
As clouded by a breath,
The first, and after-clinging trance,
From which it wakes — in death!

WHAT IS MIND?

MIND is the dress of the naked soul,
The hue of its changing light,
The cast of the passing hour's control,
The thought in the spirit's sight;
Mind is the substance and the sense,
The visage of the thing,
The soul's true subject and pretense,
Its mask, its crown and ring.

Mind is the fog, or passing cloud,
The night, or brilliant day,
The soul's one auditor, or crowd,
Its sketch, its dream, or play;
Mind is the sparkle of gem-force,
The glint of sensation's heat,
The soul's fleet wing, and untracked course,
Its bitter, and its sweet.

Mind is the shadow of all that was,
The hint of all things to be,
The soul's preceptor in all cause,
Its rivulet, or sea;
Mind is the person and estate,
The voice, the song, the tune,
The soul's concurrence and its fate,
Its midnight and its noon.

Mind is the tide-way of existence, waved
By every passing breath,
The soul's identity, as saved
Through every form of death;
Mind is the sum of joy, the sum of woe,
Life's highest and its lowest goal,
Thought's ever ebbing and returning flow—
The consciousness of soul!

WHAT IS SOUL?

THE soul is the wealth of the centuries past,
And the treasure of coming time,
The reflection of every glory cast
From the throne of The-Most-Sublime;
The depths, the heights, and the breadths of space,
And its boundless imagery;
The realm of thought and the sense of grace,
The "was" and the "is to be."

The soul is the centerless, rimless whole,
The "unbegun" and "no end,"
The will born free of the law's control,
The "feel" and the "comprehend;"
The thrill, the rhythm, and song of light
Wherein all things applaud,
The torch through the nethermost shades of night,
The discovery of God!

THE WORLD IS SELF

THE world is Self. The universe is Me.
I am its Heaven, its Hell, and its Extent;
Beyond, it matters not infinity
That I shall never know — have never spent.

Resolved in this — all comets come and go,
All suns take fire, all planets wheel around;
The subtlest ether has in me its flow,
And I, to all things, am the solid ground.

What were it all — save for the fact "I am,"
If dead, and gone to naught, the thing I was?
What were it all but a stupendous sham —
This wondrous life to which I give applause?

In my own soul, I climb the loftiest heights,
In my own mind, I view the wider skies;
Deep in my heart's depths lie the fairest sights,
And in my conscience I achieve my size.

CONSECRATION

AWAKE! O Sleeping Soul! In earnest life
Draw near to God, and woo the gifts of love;
Ask for the faith that consecrates to worth,
Ask for the hope that purifies desire,
Ask for the strength that succors and sustains,
Ask for the wisdom that prescient leads,
Ask for the gift of tongues, that all may hear,
Ask for such grace, that hearing they believe,
Ask of thine own to give, and giving all,
That all receiving, may as all possess;
Ask so to die, that dying, there be joy
For those who, poor, are world-despised and waste,
Ask thus, O Soul, the loving Father hears
When sorrow kneels, and self-denial prays.

STUDIES

THE infinite was never less, nor more;
All was, all is, all will be unto all;
There never was "beginning" to "no end";
There never can be "center" to "no bounds";
Nor God, nor man, can self annihilate,
Nor self transfer, nor self design nor mate.
God lives the growth of elemental things,
Man lives their uses segregated, set;
God joined the elements to form a sea,
Man wrought a ship to float upon its breast;
God made the ore and stored it in the earth,
Man drew it forth and shaped it into art;
Nor sea, nor ore, could finite man create,
Nor God, the Infinite, a ship or knife.

EQUALITY

BOAST not, O Man, thy few drams more of brain,
Thy larger frame, thy greater grasp of things;
God weighs not intellect, nor measures soul,
Nor yields to accident the keys of fate.
No blind fatuity, no partial hand,
Hath shaped the spirit, or diverged its path;
No lordly virtue farms the realm of thought,
No facial angle parcels out degree;
As space is ever space, so mind is mind—
A boundless universe, a boundless sense;—
Cloud-hid, or distant, still the stars are there.
Rayless, or dwarfed, all selfs are peers of all,
And destined all for equal worth to strive.

GROWTH

FROM God to man is universal growth,—
Growth — toil of law and assayist of time.
Not as evolved by self-assumed degrees,
From crude to grander types, as savants teach,
But as developed from the conscious germ,
Each shape distinct, a separate deed of power.
Thus God is growth and being all is growth,
Else lesser man the Infinite outweighs,
And God, the Infinite, lessens to a thing —
As pagans carve him — cold, unfeeling stone.
Who thinks one single thought beyond a thought,
Or does one single act beyond an act,
Has measured time, and given lines to growth.
This crowning truth man, one day, will discern,
And, seeing so, grow rational and calm.

PROPHECY

THERE will be peace, a universal tongue,
A just equality and fraternal law,
And all that, else, may substance give to worth.
Such is to be. I read it in the light
Of man's own hope, and in his faith in God.
The good shall gather and the evil lose.
The soul, refined, shall cast its ruder self,
And heaven be felt a consciousness within.
Man, sub-creator, heir of truth, shall yet
Discover life — its destiny and power,
And in the majesty of knowledge robed,
Shall scepter love — the Christ-fulfilling reign.

THE EVERLASTING HEART

Songs are fragments of existence —
Cast forth of the human soul,
Taking, of their own insistence,
Their separate shape and goal.

Tear-expressed, and yet of pleasure,
Or of love's entrancing mood,
Songs are the semblance and the measure
Of a moment understood.—

Finite sentiencies of being
That, as sparks of primal thought,
Enter the consciousness, agreeing
As of its own conscience wrought.

Stars set, and ever glowing
In the firmament of mind —
Songs are, to all human knowing,
The Infinite — divined.

Shapened, as lives are rounded
Down the long years of time,
Songs are of all selves propounded —
The deathless and sublime.—

The voices that alone are spoken
As of the spirit's art —
Distinguishing, by this one token,
The Everlasting Heart.

THAT FAITH THE BEST

I HOLD that faith the best which daily gives,
To stumbling man, the largest growth of heart;
That prayer the truest which, as daily, lives
Earth's boundless blessing — all-divining art.

I hold the Churches to be the call of God,
The school wherein our better selves may grow;
The public mentor, wielding Virtue's rod,
To deal, when precept fails, the scathing blow.

THE CHURCH OF CHRIST

SOONER or later the governed must be held,
As through the conscience yielding to the code;
For time will be when, all of doubt dispelled,
Man shall discern the Spirit's true abode.

As when the Church, exponent of the quest
For reason's self, as God obscured in man,
Shall build its temples, as of worth confessed,
Through all of science, as on Nature's plan.

When art, and mind, and treasures shall combine,
And conscience weigh, and wisdom tip the scale;
When all of law shall stand for love divine,
And peace o'er all the shackless earth prevail.

Thus shall return the heavenly Church of old,
When fearless faith first faced the lion's wrath;
When unarmed conscience braved the proud and bold,
And Christ-like men stood in the tyrant's path.

Thus shall return, as chastened by long years—
Enriched and graced by faith's diviner works—
The Church, indeed, as broadened by the Seers,
Wherein no dogma stalks or schism lurks.

The Church of Christ, as temple of the soul,
Revealing God, as centered in all things;
Giving to faith, o'er all the world, control,
And to the heart, through all of Heaven, wings.

DEATH IS NOT THAT I DIE

DEVILS and hells, and the dreams
That terrified thought in its night,
Are exorcised now by the gleams
That science is giving to light.

Science — that Church of the living,
Wherein is the worship of truth,—
Where consent is without a misgiving,
And faith hath perpetual youth.

Where hope, once flashed through the heavens,
Lights up ever farther the path;
And fancy of flight never leavens
The future with fear of its wrath.

Whose priests are as born to the altar,
Where, listening, the angels applaud;
Whose hymns are as sung from the psalter—
As old as the first thought of God.

Whose pews are the health-giving fountains,
The seas and their shell-littered shores,
The flower-sweet plains and the mountains,
And all of earth's wondrous stores.

Whose pinnacles rise ever higher,
Whose walls are the confines of space,
Whose foundations were laid by the Sire—
The Primal and Ultimate Grace.

Sweet God—so loving and tender,
It is thus on Thy bosom I lie;
While my soul, gone out to Thy splendor,
Knows that death is not that I die.

HOME LIGHTS

BABY

BABY pokes her finger
Into Mamma's eye,
Mamma says that —"Baby
Will make Mamma cry!"

Baby, smiling, googles—
Pulling Mamma's hair,
Mamma cries, but Baby—
What does Baby care?

Baby will, when older,
Kiss her Mamma's eyes,
And bedew the flowers
Where her Mamma lies.

Thus must Mammas carry,
Thus will Babies woo,
Yet, without its angels,
What would Heaven do?

AFTER MAMMA

FIRE-LIT hearth—
Full of mirth,
Mamma cuddles baby;
Finger pokes,
Laugh provokes—
Hugs and kisses, may be.

Makes a scowl,
Then a growl—
"Must be naughty kitty";
Then a smile,
And, awhile,
Sings a rocking ditty.

Now to bed,
Sleepy head—
Puts on long pjamma;
"God in sleep
Baby keep"—
Says so after Mamma.

RECONCILIATION

WEEPING, she came to my arms — Dear One!
Pity and kisses received her;
Sobbing, she lay there — my bosom upon,
Telling the story that grieved her.
More in a moment than all else had,
Tears bridged the chasm between us;
Kisses and kisses she gave and she had,
And the shadow passed from between us.

DEAREST

(From the Antipodes)

A-windward I gaze at the moon, dearest,
A-sailing aslant its pale rays,
Contrasting my night with thy noon, dearest,
My winter with thy summer days;
A-sailing the far underwold, dearest,
"Would always," I say to the night,
"That mine were the dark and the cold, dearest,
So thine were the warmth and the light."

I say to the night and the noon, dearest,
Far under the star-symboled cross,
As wooed by the ocean's weird tune, dearest,
At speed with the lone albatross;
"However the skies may divide, dearest,
However the seas intervene,
Thou wilt ever be felt at my side, dearest,
Thou wilt ever be sung as my queen."

AFFECTION–PROMPTED

DEAR, if you will but look below
The surface currents of my life,
You will descry an undertow
That, with a swift and even flow,
Forever seeks my wife.

Sweet, if you will but stand apart,
From out my sterner sphere of strife,
You will discern my steady art
Is but the constant flow of heart
I owe unto my wife.

Love, if you will but center thus,
The faith with which the soul is rife,
No cloud can rise to shadow us,
But well content and emulous,
My hope shall be my wife.

MARIANA

ONCE I sat, at ease reclining,
Gazing at the starlit sky,
While my soul, itself divining,
Wandered with a maiden by.

Down the lane I saw them going,—
Where the yew-tree casts its leaves,
Through its boughs, the pale moon, showing,
Looked as one who sorely grieves,—

Saw the maiden's golden tresses
Pass within the dark divide,
While my soul, with love's caresses,
Pressed her dear hand to its side.

Presently, my soul, returning,
Came without the blue-eyed maid,
Came, yet with a constant yearning,
Gazing deep into that shade.

Nevermore, at ease reclining,
Gazing at the starlit sky,
Shall my soul, itself divining,
Wander with that maiden by.

LIFE'S ANGELS

WHEN the cares of life divide me,
And the night-watch is confessed,
Comes, then, one who sits beside me,
Sits and soothes my soul to rest —

Comes in silence all unbroken,
Sits as presence all unseen,
And with words no tongue hath spoken
Breathes a consciousness serene.

Then my soul goes out before me —
Up a broad expanse of light,
And the hours of day restore me
Unto faith's diviner sight.

Then I know that Heaven is near us,
And that those who go before —
Loved ones who were wont to cheer us,
Are life's angels evermore.

L'ENVOI

DEAR Father, in Thy loving hands,
Here with the night's returning,
I place my labor as it stands,
For Thy approval yearning;
All else were recompense too slight,
Though man's high praise confessing,
If, with the waning of the light,
Were added not Thy blessing.

God, from Thy heart, alone, I would
Draw every thought and feeling;
Give me the consciousness of good,
Thy nearer self revealing;
Give me, of needed strength and rest,
The body's wonted power,
And wing, as an angelic guest,
The soul through night's long hour.

Hear me, as for the poor in need,
    As for the weak who suffer,
As for the strong who bravely lead,
    Though duty's paths grow rougher;
Hear me, as in the voice of Christ,
    His human form caressing,
Whose pity for the thief sufficed—
    O Father, yield Thy blessing!

FROM THE AUTHOR'S

AMERICAN HEREDITY

A PATRIOTIC POEM IN ONE BOOK

APOTHEOSIS

THERE is for woman, now, the dawn at hand —
As of a kingdom yet the more to be,
Wherein her sex shall share the world's command,
And give to State, as of herself made free,
A partner-state — as wed to what we see.—

A duel system — as of life and soul;
A double purpose — as for Heaven and earth; —
The crown encircled with the aureole,
The Cross its sceptre, and of double worth
The goal ahead for every human birth.

This is, for woman, yet her sex's aim —
The riper meaning of her softer heart:
To purge the world of all that dooms to shame,
To guide its morals, and to bar the art
That leads through falsehood to the public smart.

Nor, as if pressing thus, beyond her sex,
Nor, for the man, contracting life's domain —
The new committals are the less to vex,
The less to burden, narrow or restrain,
Because of larger circumstance and reign; —

Because, as qualified for yet the more —
As of the woman, and for yet the man,
The yet accretion of the larger store —
In all that industry and conception can —
By native instinct and of Nature's plan.

For this, America now sets the pace,
For this, its woman dons the robe of state, —
The queen confirmed by myriad acts of grace,
As of the past conferred, and of the fate
That made her consort of a king as great.

Thus, is her life to be the more of love —
As ever the more its sentiment and prize,
Its dreams conceived as ever the more above —
As of the earth spread round with fairer skies,
And of existence given sweeter ties.

She would not be the man in aught she could,
She still will seek him as her lord and king,
The hero, champion of her every good,
And warrior, battling for the crown and ring,
In all that statesmen prize and poets sing.

She will be charming — to be charmed by him;
She will be regal — but his crown to wear;
Her voice uplifted — but as he shall hymn
The deeper cadence to the faith they share —
Owning, alike, the burdens they may bear;

But, as the Soulward ever the more divined,
And as the leader in concurrent strife,
The Woman, conscious of her sex refined,
And of that larger mystery of life —
The Mother sacred in the comrade Wife.

FROM THE AUTHOR'S

SOULWARD

A SUBJECTIVE POEM IN ONE BOOK

PROEM

IF, IN the Temple, thou wouldst worship God,
With reverent awe, I enter with thee there;
Come, then, as reverently, with me abroad—
For thou shouldst worship God as everywhere—
And I will show thee where His feet have trod.

If, at the Altar, thou wouldst seek the Christ,
And thou wouldst ask me to the Sacred Feast,
My heart would deem the Symbol had sufficed,
And take as truly from the holy priest,
For thus, with God, is fellowship increased.

If, at the close, thy holier thoughts took wing,
And bore the burden of thy soul on high,
And thou wouldst ask me to thy hand to cling,
So, in such spirit, ask of thee, do I,
For so, in holy thought of God, I sing.

TITLE TEXT

WHENCE are the dreams we paint in vivid words,
Our lofty aims, our all-inspiring deeds,—
The hopes which single from the grosser herds,
And breathe of Soul—and of the Spirit's needs,
If not of Purpose wherein Nature pleads?

Is Humbolt's life but dissipated dust?
Are Homer, Milton, but as pulseless waste?
When earth, transformed, throws off its present crust,
Shall all of life be in the wreck effaced—
A Shakespeare's genius into chaos thrust?

Our martyrs, saints, shall these be lost in death—
Engulfing all that virtue sought and gained?
Is, then, existence but of mortal breath?
And all of grace to which it hath attained
But as the Roman gladiator trained?

There has been, then, no plan led thro' it all?
No God behind, no Heaven to the fore?
Just a blind trend of atoms under thrall
Of soulless force — unmeaning evermore —
Whatever form, or sentiency they bore?

Religion dead? — and psalm and prayer, too?
And all the argument for God and Christ?
No moral worth transfigured to the view?
No Cross upborne that for the thief sufficed? —
But cyclic fate — endowing to undo? —

The universe a sepulchre? — and doom
The bat-winged demon of a Lethic forge? —
Where life is hammered shapeless to the tomb,
By many a cruel pang and biting scourge,
While time recurs an all-enshrouding gloom?

Conscience is victim, then, and the Self-mind —
That dream of beauty, that desire for good,
That age-long growth of myriad forms divined —
Is God-betrayed, and Heaven by Hell withstood,
Or, of itself, it is the thing it would.

No, all of motion, all of matter prove,
Whether of cyclic law or planet rule,
And all of conscience, consciousness and love,
That more than Chance is master of the school,
Which trains a human hand to use a tool.

It is because that matter-form is Fate,
That cycles blur, and suns exhaust their heat,
That Nature plans, in man, the soul's estate,
A love-uplifting, and a beauty sweet,
Beyond the death-throes in which planets meet;—

And this progressive; so, that on, and on,
With every new division of her skies,
There still shall be the Being built upon,
Of larger mastery and with clearer eyes:
And ever the fairer face and sweeter ties.

And this is whence the dreams we give to song,
Whence the uplifting inspirations felt,
That wing beyond the vision of the throng,
And give to life, as thus in worship knelt,
The title—"Soulward," as it here is spelt.

CONTEXT

THERE is the gazing on the window's shrine,
When, as without the old cathedral's walls,
We stand perplexed, endeavoring to divine,
In those dull bits of glass and leaden balls,
The Saintly Child who unto Heaven calls.

And there is, too, the gazing from within,
When, as kneeling at the altar's rail,
We see all shapely what without had been
A waste of glazing; so shall the light avail
When life shall, Soulward, seek the holy grail.

For so the mortal comes as veil between—
Save as the soul hath for a moment's space,
By chance bewrayment of its earthly screen,
Shown to the world fleet visions of its grace,
Man hath not seen his own immortal face—

Hath never gazed upon himself within,
As seeing clearly, through the glazier's art,
The holy presence shrinking from its sin,
The sacred flame, the consecrated heart,
And the uplifted hands to God apart.

But, to the Soulward, who shall look without,
Shall see, as visions of the blest were his,
The glad soul cleaving through the clouds of doubt,
To where, above, shines out from realms of bliss,
The path to God—no seeking feet may miss.

SELECTION — 1

Not to this world, it is, that hope may cling,
Not on this earth, it is, that pride may rear;
Who shall be crowned of man is not a King; —
Unless of God, there is no title clear,
Unless of Spirit, no domain of Wing; —

For other worlds have grown (as this has grown)
To sturdy life, to beauty and estate,
Only to cast aside the shining gown —
(As this shall, later on) — and, desolate,
Become the naked cast-a-ways of fate.

It is not here eternity may plant, —
Or here give quarterings to immortal blood;
No other orb but looks on this askant,
And wonders when shall come that final flood
Which shall o'erlay its palaces with mud; —

Or, that surprising of the final frost,
Which shall envelope all beneath its flow—
Sending the spirit to its Pentecost,
From this, its sepulchre of eternal snow—
Giving to space another sign of woe;—

Or that swift meeting of its cosmic end,
When shattered thrones shall be as cosmic dust,
And scattered fragments of its crust shall lend
A sign of portent to some other crust,
Where other life shall see and comprehend.

No, not of earth should pride set up its boast,
Nor wealth essay, nor power hedge about;
No kingdom here, no strength of armored post,
Can keep the final ravisher without,
Or spare the soul when conscience sits in doubt.

SELECTION—2

WHAT other impulse could of Nature grow
Than Life-desire, seeking herself to be?
And this what other aspiration show
Than that of Love, in all conception free,
Seeking her God thro' all Infinity?

First,—the Spirit was, in essential law,
Then sentient Will—as all-dividing life,
Then birth of Soul, to mend the fatal flaw
That seared existence with the brand of strife,
And doomed to death, ere yet the mortal saw.

From death in matter grew the life in soul,
As mind, conceiving of itself, increased,
And took, in consciousness, the spirit's role—
From the set bondage of the law released—
To be a something more than plant or beast.

Heredity conserved each slow advance —
By whatsoever road direction tried,
Until life came unto that happy chance
Which drafted off into the soul-allied,
And gave it hope beyond the death it died.

This, then, is Man! his high position won
By fair survival in the race to God;
His mind, alone, can grasp the courses run,
Can read the foot-prints in the drifted sod,
Where Heavenly Purpose down the ages trod.

And he, alone, who wrought for speech a sign,
For hand a tool, for eye a special sight,—
Who gave to nakedness a dress benign,
Can take unto himself the spirit's flight,
And so ascend unto the Heavenly Height.

What hope springs here? What comfort of the heart
Pours its glad presence thro' the shades of doubt?
We are of God, of Nature, and of Art,
And who shall strive to live the purpose out,
Shall be with these in life's diviner part.

SELECTION — 3

AND why not growth — God and the Universe?
Our earth conceived so pendant in the whole,
That it is ranked but as its size shall nurse —
Born for a span within its sphere to roll,
And then to die — so giving birth to soul —

So giving shape to consciousness apart.
As the birth-impulse of its will took hue; —
A different functioning leading up to heart,
A different structure threading purpose through,
As there shall roll fresh planets into view?

To all must Form pertain, and Mind, and Soul —
So like is Matter, Sentiency, and Will,
Wherever seas spread out, or mountains nod,
There will be found the like organic thrill.
There will be grown the like immortal skill; —

Different and differing, though, for never twain
Can in a boundless universe be born
Alike in all the branchings of a vein.
Or in the hope of an immortal dawn,
For the same blendings never chance again.

Nor in the Boundless can there Centre be,
Save as recentres in a boundless change—
Forever acting as the bound and free,
And on, and on, through an exhaustless range,
Keeping the poise-law of Infinity.

Of space, of worlds, of life, of God,
Where can be limit set, or law begun?
Something we reckon safely of the sod,
Somewhere relation measure by the sun,
But nothing, and nowhere, of the All-in-One!

Of Mind, the Measureless is set before,
And as of this, as always light to light,
Shall be the lamp held by the Evermore,
And inextinguishable, however night
Shall of its folds envelope or affright.

SELECTION—4

Seen but as ball-masks are the films of life;—
However gilded, or however prized,
Matter is but the smoke and dust of strife—
The cloud in which the Spirit, first disguised,
Must hide until the Soul is recognized.

Beyond its use, what folly to apply!
Or still beyond, what madness to insist—
Ordaining livery of the forms that die,
So that the living must the dead resist,
Or, as the slaves of empty tombs—comply!

What God would so ordain, what Heaven applaud,
What Purpose thrive, if Will could tie behind,
From its first leapings from the primal sod,
And leave its moulds upon the stupid kind—
To weigh them backward, or to keep them blind!

No, not from Death is mandate by intent—
Not of the Tomb to govern or destroy!
Will was born free—no partial measure meant—
Free to elect, endeavor and enjoy,
As chance might yield, or Self its means employ.

SELECTION — 5

THAT man should fail, where insects win the prize,
Grows of the fact that he is pushed along —
The always-growth and never-to-be-of-size —
Tottering on brinks, and wandering in the wrong —
The God-companion, rescued by the throng.

The fault is this: that human love bequeaths,
While Nature's love, including all, endows;
Not for a part, but for the whole, she breathes,
While man, as yet a dwarf, behind the brows,
No larger freedom than he must allows.

And yet, in him, lie gifts of countless things,
Of powers and means so potent, and so vast
That he might give, as with the power of kings,
And yet, retained, have still the more amassed,
As still the more inheriting the past

But of the Beast — man's first imagined Man —
Drawn from life's first conceit by slow advance,
The Germ-companion of each structured clan.
The self-selected of all life's expanse,
It is not true that he is here by chance,—

The one round higher of the sire before,
Descent of matter toiling unto life,
Gathering by foot and hand the larger store —
With still no subtler purpose-shaping rife
Than such as accident drew forth from strife!

The Monkey-Man! — this bridge was never crossed!
The broad ravine shows bottomless and wide;
The leap is seen, but as new purpose tossed —
A new God-thought — upon the other side,
To be life's double — earth and heaven allied;

To be a Tolstoï — luminous of Soul,
A Pasteur — baring Nature to the Mind;
A Jesus — that prescient faith might roll
The poet's numbers on the Hope-enshrined —
As of the God-in-Man, the Christ-defined.

The Christ-defined! — shall this the road be, then?
Always the Cross-directed and up-born?
The Saviour still so crucified of men
That pity weeps in vain, and virtue, torn,
Must ever feel the consecrating thorn?

Shall such vast patience argue nothing more
Than man shall die an unrecorded thought?
Shall such sublimity of self encore
To still a dying commonness of lot —
Infinity of aim — eternally forgot?

Dear Soul, be not cast down, thy time is yet;
Thou hast been nurtured at to kind a breast
To be in darkness when earth's sun is set; —
For God is in us, and of us confessed,
And here we may — in firm conviction — rest.

L' ENVOI

And now, O Muse, let us fold our wings,
O Mind, let us now depart;
We have built anew where the ivy clings,
And over the world of art
We have carried the Soul's Delsarte.

What is there more we would gather and give,
Or what of song our renew?
Here is the sign that asserts we live,
And here is the double view,
Gathered, O Mind, of the Soul and you!

How shall they say, who shall come to our feast,
Given as conscience would fain,
Shall our words be those of the healing priest?
Or shall they give sorrow and pain —
As of truth that was sought in vain?

B.P.

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